The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Editorial Farewell.

The present editor, who succeeded the Rev. Alfred Turner in the position a number of years ago, finds it necessary to give up the work owing to the pressure of other engagements. Yet he cannot sever the connection between himself and his readers without a word of farewell and also one of grateful thanks. The latter is due to the correspondents in the different congregations who have from time to time kept him in touch with local happenings. He has reason to know that such chronicles have been by no means the least appreciated among the contents of the magazine. Thanks are also due, and are here gratefully tendered, to the writers of articles during his editorship. Some of the most regular contributors removed to England and their places were not easily or adequately filled. But to all who contributed to the interest of the varied monthly contents he is sincerely grateful and takes this opportunity of recording his admitted indebtedness.

It is unfortunate that the magazine, like every similar publication which can count on only a limited circle of readers, is always crippled in its activities by lack of finances. Generous friends from time to time averted the evil day of reckoning, but the present situation is one of grave concern for the business management. Unless the magazine is more generally supported by the members of the Non-Subscribing Church it cannot continue. The General Synod at its recent session appointed a Committee to look into the general question of the Magazine and its continuance, and it it is hoped that the latter may be possible. But it will only be so if those who desire it to go on rally to its aid. Once suspended, it will be difficult to revive it or to provide a successor. A church like our own ought to have its own organ of opinion and if it ceases to have our constituency will speedily perceive the need. It is therefore all the more imperative that the present magazine should not be allowed to lapse without a determined effort to keep it going.

Your retiring editor has been a regular contributor to the magazine since the first number. The latter practically coincided with the beginning of his ministry in Rosemary Street, and it is with great reluctance that he severs a connection which, while not without its cares and anxieties, has not been without its compensations. He is deeply grateful for the forbear ance accorded any shortcomings and for the appreciation which has attended his effort to serve the common cause. Let it be borne in mind, however, that while editors may come and go, the cause must go on, and it is his fervent hope and prayer that in other hands the magazine may continue to serve our Non-Subscribing Constituency.

Notes of the Month.

In the immediate future two of our North of Ireland Congregations which have been for some time without full-time ministers will enter upon a new period of activity under the guidance of a capable spiritual overseer. A month ago we held out the promise of a definite appointment to the pulpit of Larne. Since then the Rev. John Begg, of Downpatrick, received through the members of the Presbytery of Antrim a hearty invitation to become assistant and successor to the Rev. James Kennedy. That invitation he has accepted, and he will enter upon his new charge at the beginning of August. We hope and believe that under his control the ancient and honoured congregations of Larne and Kilwaughter will see a new chapter of successful work commenced and continued with ever-increasing results. Already Mr. Begg has shown in the sphere of labour he is soon to relinquish a capacity for good work and we are confident that the equipment which served him so well at Downpatrick will be equally instrumental for good at Larne. It is to be hoped, however, that Downpatrick will not be long in securing a capable successor to Mr. Begg.

* *

Mr. S. P. Whitehouse, B.A., has now completed his course of studies at Manchester College, Oxford, and the congregation at All Soul's Church, Belfast, will soon heartily welcome him as their pastor. During his college vacations he has ministered most acceptably on a number of Sundays, and the prospect of his permanent settlement is gladly anticipated. As the minister of the Second Congregation in Belfast he will enter into a goodly succession, and we hope for him and his new congregation many years of happy and successful co-operation. The Ordination Service, for which the Presbytery of Antrim is also responsible, as well as the Installation Service at Larne, is fixed for Friday, September 3rd. The date of the Larne Service, Tuesday, July 20th. Both ministers will be well established before the winter.

* *

It is always good for us to see and hear distinguished members of other Christian Communities, and therefore we gladly welcome the intimation publicly made that Queen's University, Belfast, has arranged with Dean Inge, of St. Paul's Cathedral, to deliver the first lecture in connection with the Dill Memorial. The latter is designed to honour Sir Samuel Dill, an outstanding classical scholar, and there is therefore much fitness in appointing as Dill Lecturer one so fully conversant with classical lore and Christian history as the eminent Dean of St. Paul's. He is assured of a very hearty welcome to the City of Belfast.

* *

The Sub-Committee appointed by the Synod to take charge of this Magazine have requested Rev. D. J. Williams to take over the duties of Editor and contributions should in future be sent to him at Killinchy, not later than the 16th of the month preceding the monthly issue. Rev. G. J. Slipper still continues to act in the capacity of Business Manager and would welcome the prompt payment of all accounts due.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G J. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

Temperance Notes.

The Old Story.

The Press informs us, in its report on the Annual Meeting of our Synod, that there was " a lively debate on Temperance." My impression was that the " liveliness " in most part consisted in the telling of the usual " story " that no Temperance Work was done in our Congregations. It is indeed a " story." I know personally that very good and definite Temperance Work is steadily pursued in the Congregations of Mountpottinger, Holywood, Rademon, Banbridge, the Domestic Mission ; and, I have little reason to doubt, in many other Congregations. I would like to receive reports from those who possess Bands of Hope, or Temperance Societies, even if only to mention the fact.

A Great Opportunity Missed.

To my mind, and to many others, our Synod let slip a glorious opportunity at its Annual Assembly. The Rev. A. L. Agnew brought forward a resolution in favour of Prohibition. He made an eloquent and able plea for the case. It was to the effect that the Drink Traffic was looked upon as an evil. The Church, as a Church, can have only one way of dealing with an evil, namely, labouring for its abolition. What a fine thing it would be, said he, if our Church, among all the Christian Churches, should be the first to make a decided and definite pronouncement. But the Synod would not have it. Instead a tame resolution in favour of Local Option was passed. Our cousins across the Atlantic Ocean will be disappointed. Our Church in particular should be in the forefront for all movements for social betterment. We will repeat that it was a glorious opportunity allowed to slip by —for Prohibition is coming.

To Resume.

That is, from where we left things last month on the subject of the coming of Prohibition in the States. We quoted from an eloquent plea by Dr. Channing, 1837.

In 1840 came the famous Washington Movement, which we are told swept " like a wave of altruistic enthusiasm and emotion over the Country." Its chief aim was at the reforming of drunkards, and over 600,000 signed the Temperance Association pledge. But quite a large proportion of these thousands (some say the larger proportion) returned to their old habits ; for no effort was made this time to restrain the traffic.

J. B. Gough, 1842.

This famous (world renowned) orator travelled the country ; also Father Mathew ; and Theodore Parker All my readers must know Theodore Parker—as all knew that beautiful hymn " O thou great friend to all the sons of men." He was a great lover of freedom if ever there was one—you remember his heroic labours at real personal risks in the movement for the emancipation of slaves. I believe it was this great soul who said (in effect) " I suppose the fault lies with me in being in too great a hurry. I am impatient, God is not, but moves slowly and surely." In 1846 Parker preached a sermon upon " The Perishing Classes," in which he said :—

> " I cannot but think the time is coming, when he who makes, or sells, this poison as a drink will be legally ranked with other poisoners, with thieves, robbers and house-burners ; when a fortune acquired by such means will be thought infamous, as one would be if acquired by piracy. **I know good men have formerly engaged in this trade ; they did it ignorantly. Now we know the unavoidable effects thereof."**

Refusal to Grant Licences.

In 1847, the Mayor of Boston (Josiah Quincy), refused, by a casting vote, to grant licences in that City. Prohibition sentiment was by now gaining strength. " A spirit was rising for the suppression of the traffic." In 1847, also, the United States Supreme Court decided that the States had the right to regulate and prohibit the traffic. In 1848 a prohibition bill was introduced into the Massachusetts Legislature, but failed to pass. But three years later—1851—the famous Maine Law was enacted—of this and speedier movement in our next. P.G.

Sicily.

A central position in the Mediterranean, a charming climate, and the most varied scenery, constitute a triology of natural attractions. No wonder that in the ancient world of which the great inland sea was the centre, Sicily was pre-eminently important. In every great historical epoch events of far-reaching significance were enacted on its coast. The Greeks planted colonies in every favourable spot, the Carthaginians coveted its fine harbours, the Romans made a bold and successful bid for its best cities, while Saracens, Normans, Spaniards, and French in succession swept victoriously across its hills and dales. Perhaps in the whole of the early struggles of contending civilisations, no single land saw so much and suffered so constantly as the sorely-harassed island of Sicily.

To-day the visitor is fascinated by what it has to offer. Wherever he turns, memorials of the historic past meet his admiring gaze. The finest examples of Greek architecture outside Greece itself, beautiful temples in every stage of ruin, with one or two still almost complete ; theatres magnificently planted on the hill-sides—these and many other objects testify to that consummate love of beauty which made Athens the mother of all later art. When she yielded perforce to the might of conquering Rome she did not relinquish her role as teacher in the realm of spiritual things. In too many instances the imperial pupil spoiled what he took over, lowering the standard of artistic presentation in a marked degree. And yet the aqueduct, the bath, the amphitheatre, all bear witness in Sicily to Rome's constructive ability.

But it is not so much of the things of the past that we would here speak. Sicily has always been famous for her glorious climate and the products of her fertile soil. An abundance of brilliant sunshine makes the life of the Sicilians essentially that of the open air. Moreover, beautiful as her cities and towns are, most of the inhabitants still pursue the ancient art of agriculture. Miles of the country are covered with vineyards and with orange and lemon and apricot groves, while the fig, the prickly pear and other fruits flourish amazingly. Flowers of every colour, growing wild on the hill sides, or massed in the most gorgeous groupings in gardens, delight the eye and make the air almost sickly by their perfume. Even in classical times Sicily was famous for its honey, and to-day its stores show no sign of shortcoming in either quantity or quality. Along with fresh rolls and butter honey forms a good beginning for the day's activities.

The best time to be abroad in Sicily is the early morning. At six o'clock or even earlier the peasant is seen entering the old gates of the picturesque town. His gaily-attired mule with heavily-ladened panniers makes light of its load even when the latter is crowned by the picturesque person of its owner, conspicuous in bright-coloured cap or coat. At a still earlier hour one meets mule and owner descending some steep hillside on a track no motor or wheeled-vehicle could possibly traverse. At every level crossing as the train passes they stand grouped together—country carts with three mules harnessed abreast, and with the original woodwork of cart and wheels covered by brightly-coloured scenes from sacred or secular life. An abundance of bright and varied colour, created either by Nature herself or by men's imitative arts, is the most striking characteristic of the landscape.

The peasantry are the chief providers of the town's daily supplies. Vegetables of every kind, oranges and lemons with leaves and stalks still attached, juicy apricots, deliciously

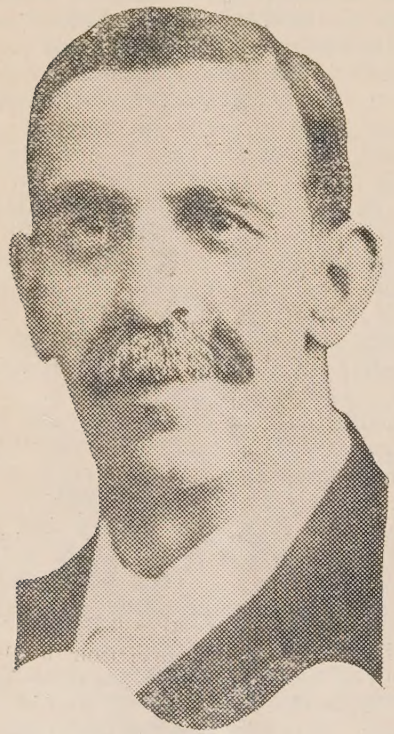
refreshing in their ripe condition; sweet-smelling flowers and herbs; country butter, eggs and cheese,—these are but a few of the attractive wares offered for sale in the early morning as the vendors go their rounds with strange and penetrating calls. Listen as carefully as we would it was difficult to relate what they said to the specific articles offered for sale. However, the buyers seemed to know, for from this side or that fitting response would be made. But, sometimes, almost on one's head a basket would be let down by a cord from a balcony high above to be promptly filled by the peasant with vegetables or with fruit. The very tall houses in the old Sicilian winding streets must have many stairs, otherwise how can people reach the flats they occupy! Yet there is much wise economy both of stairs and of shoe leather for much trade is done from the balconies by means of cord and basket.

Not the least interesting feature of this open-air life in the town is that of the ordinary handicrafts. These are carried on in shops open to the streets, with the actual pavement as a kind of annexe. Clothes for both sexes are in various stages of creation, boots are being made or repaired, the laundresses ply their old-time employment, the carpenter, watchmaker, blacksmith, and goldsmith carry on their various avocations. Nor are they silent workers, for in addition to the sounds of their actual toil there is the accompaniment of vivacious chat or hearty song. There is no more appealing sight than that of the narrow Sicilian street with its crowded and varied human activities.

Yet the most ancient and the most famous of all pursuits in Sicily is that of the shepherd. From time immemorial the pastoral life has been followed, and its character and attractions made known by poets renowned for their simplicity and susceptibility to natural beauty. Theocritus, Bion and Moschus have delighted successive generations of men and women by their charming pictures of pastoral life. The very scenes they describe so felicitously meet the eye of the traveller to-day. In a setting of lofty hills, under a brilliant blue sky, the shepherd leans on his tall staff and contemplates his scattered flock. For the time being his dog is content to rest inactive, while its owner stands statuesquely aloft. But now a quiet signal passes from eye to eye, and the dog rounds up the stragglers. It is time to separate the multitude into its component parts for on the common pasture ground sheep and goats and even pigs have become all intermingled. New significance is given to the familiar words of Jesus—the sheep must go to the right hand and the goats to the left. Earlier in the day we encountered the separate forces—the goatherd leaving the old town gate with his crowd of splendid white goats. Nor was his journey an uninterrupted one. Ere he left the town he had more than once to arrest his progress and that of some she-goat in order to fill the bowl of a customer with milk. A little later we saw the sheep making their exit, and we had once again to make a mental comparison between the sheep and the goats, very much to the advantage of the latter. For, most assuredly, whatever may be the failings of the goat, lack of gumption is certainly not one of them. No member of the animal creation goes more warily or circumspectly than the average goat. And as they return from their pasture in the cooler evening hour it is pure devilry and not stupidity which makes goats take a wrong turning. They know just as well as their stolid guide where their home really is.

The herding of the goats in their fold marks the close of the Sicilian day. It is now that the balconies and the flat roofs of the houses muster their family conclaves. Greetings pass thence to friends strolling along the streets below. The brilliant sunshine

which made active exercise a boredom and somewhat of a danger earlier, has now retired for a time and the streets have resumed their rightful purpose of channels of communication. The Sicilians are sociable folk, and whether in the open-air cafès or outside their own doors, they delight to chat and chaff or sing some popular song. Early as is their wonted uprising they are loathe to leave the brightness and gaiety of the streets behind, and until quite a late hour the fun and frolic continue, even beneath the windows of the hotel where the tired tourist is vainly trying to prepare for another exacting but delightful day in Sicily.



THE REV. H. J. ROSSINGTON, M.A., B.D.

who makes his last appearance in this issue as Editor of this Magazine.

A Spiritual House.

"I liked the architecture of your address," remarked an experienced speaker, who happened to be a hearer, to one who had tried to state his case as clearly as he could, on a Sunday evening. The term "architecture" was rather unusual, as applied to an address, yet it was suggestive. "Architecture" has been defined as "frozen music," both being in reality the same, the former belonging to space, and the other to time. Pass a Masonic Lodge at the hour of assembly, and one may hear the music of the organ, and the voices of the Brethren rising in praise. They are said to be at labour, when thus assembled, and evidently prayer and praise is part of such labour, and as their work is to build, then they must be building a spiritual temple. The fixed form of a Church service is called a "liturgy," and the root of the word means work or labour, and it is a way of serving. "With praise and with prayer shall our Temple be built." "To God alone be the glory." "We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." These words occur in the opening part of a liturgy.

Sound builds form. The writer knows of a photographic plate with beautiful forms like shells and leaves on it, produced by music. An experiment sometimes made, is that of fine seed scattered on a drum-head, and a violin played close to the edge, and the seed is moved by the vibrations into all sorts of beautiful forms. There is a profound truth in the text: "All things were made by the Word."

We are aware that matter is not limited to the grades that we know of it by our five senses; that there are subtler and subtler grades of matter. What then in that subtle matter would be the form built up by an anthem? We can imagine one, building up a form like a mountain,

with dashes of colour, with rugged rocks and cascades, for a brief while after the final "Amen," retaining its unity as a structure.

What of the spiritual temple? Philip Henry Wicksteed once used the expression concerning a cathedral, "the very Word made stone." Surely in the development of church-architecture we can trace the gradual growth of forms more and more expressive of worship and aspiration. Those old builders laid every stone as an act of worship, they worked as though they were inspired, and in their exaltation obtained flashes of genius which were glimpses of the Hidden Work.

With no half-heartedness of strangers to foreigners; but as fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, the building was fitly framed together and grew into a holy temple in the Lord. By the Hidden Work they built the spiritual temple as well as the outer; but, one of stone, as living stones also were they themselves builded, for as one pillar, emblem of man, represents strength, and another pillar, emblem of woman, represents wisdom, and another pillar, emblem of the child, represents beauty, so does everyone taking part in the Hidden Work represent some particular quality, some aspect more than others. The work is a service. "We know that we do serve Him best, when best we serve our brother man." Then let each become a Knight of service. In one of our churches, people bought a ticket which paid for a brick, and the more of these that were sold and bought, the more bricks there were, and the Sunday-school paid for the granite pillars. So stands the building to-day, but they who did these things were also "bricks" and "pillars."

We are told that in Egypt, a group or as we would say, a lodge, was made up of carefully selected people, every-one of whom was able to contribute a quality in the Hidden Work, such as Truth and Accuracy, Industry, Tact, Courage, Cheerfulness, Justice, Purity, and then each was an expert in that particular quality. Each aimed at having one quality strongly marked, whatever the extent of other qualities; but, all combined built up a perfect unit, and each felt he needed the others' help. Thus each need "go out no more," that is to say, became "established" as a Pillar in the Temple of God.

ULLIN.

The Presbytery of Antrim.

At the commencement of the 18th century, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland known as the General Synod consisted of eleven Presbyteries and one hundred and forty Congregations. Its boundaries did not extend much beyond the few counties comprised in the north-eastern portion of Ulster. In discipline and doctrine the Presbyterians in Ireland had conformed to the law of the Scottish Kirk from which they had obtained most of their ministers; so that the doctrines professed by the pastors and taught to the people were strictly Calvinistic. There does not appear to have been any religious test imposed as terms of communion in the Presbyterian Church for the first hundred years after the settlement was formed in Ulster, for it was not until 1705 that we read of the first enforcement of Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Several circumstances combined about this time to invite freedom of enquiry and cause discussion about religious liberty, and the right of private judgment.

The trial, conviction, fining and imprisonment in 1703 of the Rev. Thomas Emlyn, one of the pastors of Wood Street Congregation, Dublin, for denying the doctrine of the supreme Deity of Jesus Christ called forth a large amount of sympathy from all classes

of liberal Protestants particularly in the Presbyterian community in the North of Ireland.

The rejection of the authority of human articles of belief by the Presbyterian Church in Geneva in 1706, and the debates at Salters' Hall, London, in 1719, also contributed their share in stimulating a spirit of free enquiry which was afterwards so prominently developed amongst the leading Presbyterians in Ulster.

The establishment of the celebrated "Belfast Society" was mainly due to the Rev. John Abernethy of Antrim. One of the ablest of the pioneers of religious freedom in Ulster, Abernethy was born in 1680, his father was minister of Brigh, Co. Tyrone, afterwards of Moneymore and lastly of Coleraine, where he died 1703. Young Abernethy was educated in Scotland, getting his M.D. about 1696, at Glasgow College, It was here he became acquainted with a fellow student, John Simson, afterwards the celebrated Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, who for certain theological heresies was removed from office in 1715. The early college friendship formed continued throughout their varied careers, and no doubt served to sustain them in their contests with bigotry and intolerance. Abernethy was licensed to preach in 1702 by the Presbytery of Route. He was in Dublin at the trial of Emlyn and received a call from the Wood Street Congregation but declined, ultimately being ordained minister of Antrim on the 18th August, 1703. During his residence there he received pressing calls from the Congregations of Coleraine, Derry, Belfast and Usher's Quay, Dublin. In the year 1730, after the discussion in the Synod of Ulster had ended, he accepted the second invitation to become one of the pastors of Wood Street where he died in 1740, aged 60 years. Abernethy was eminent as a preacher and his "Sermons on the Divine Attributes," eulogised by Dr. Johnson, was for some years used as a class book in Trinity College. The Belfast Society met once a month at Antrim for the purpose of devotion, conference and interchange of books; it was composed of ministers and students. According to Dr. Bruce, "Among the members were T. Shaw, of Ahoghill; W. Taylor, of Cairncastle; M. Bruce, Holywood; J. Abernethy, of Antrim; S. Haliday and James Kirkpatrick, of Belfast, who, with other Non-Subscribers, afterwards composed the Presbytery of Antrim. Their method was to confer on the meaning of difficult tests, compare one place with another, and debate on the sentiment of the best interpreters. For this purpose two were appointed at every meeting; one for the Old Testament, the other for the New, to study three or four chapters in each, without debarring others from proposing doubts on other passages. They also conversed on the most profitable mode of preaching, visiting the sick, and discharging the other duties of the pastoral office. They consulted on proper measures for procuring the best intelligence concerning books, and united in buying them.

Dr. Reid in his "History of the Irish Presbyterian Church," states that the opinions inculcated by the "Belfast Society" were the same as those then prevalent amongst the Presbyterian Churches in Switzerland, and adopted in England by Whiston, Clark and Hoadley; and that their tendency was "to undermine the entire system of theology termed orthodoxy."

There can be no doubt that the discussions in this Society paved the way, and matured the arguments which led to the assertion of Non-Subscription in the Synod of Ulster, and ultimately resulted in the formation of the Presbytery of Antrim.

But the approximate cause which led to the debates between Subscribers and Non-Subscribers in the General Synod was the discourse delivered by Rev. Abernethy in the Meeting House of the First Congregation, Belfast, on the 9th December,

1719, and published under the title **"Religious Obedience founded on Personal Persuasion,"** Read now by the light of modern reflection and inquiry, this discourse must be viewed by all impartial minds as a production of wonderful ability and sound reasoning. He contended that the whole fabric of religion rests on the way in which the unaided reason of man interprets the decrees of Providence, he admits of no restriction that tends to limit the right of private judgment, but asserts that every man's persuasion of what is right and true is the sole rule of faith and conduct—"that there is no culpability in error arrived at after a deliberate and impartial investigation of the truth ; that it is in the highest degree unjust and unscriptural to exclude from Christian fellowship any who walk according to their persuasion no matter how they may differ in opinion from the Church ; and that all doctrines are non-essential, in which human reason and Christian sincerity permit men to differ."

As might be expected these views created alarm amongst the orthodox, and reports were immediately spread abroad that some ministers in the Synod were embracing new schemes of doctrine and church government, and had likewise formed a design to lay aside the Westminister Confession of Faith. In consequence at the next meeting of Synod (in 1720), a series of debates were commenced which extended over a period of seven years and ended in 1726 in the ejection of seventeen ministers from the Synod who formed themselves into a separate body as "the Presbytery of Antrim." The names of the seventeen ministers were Rev. John Abernethy, Antrim ; Rev. Michael Bruce, Holywood ; Rev. Josias Clugston, Larne ; Rev. John Elder, Aghadoey ; Rev. Dr. Colvil, Dromore ; Rev. S. Haliday, 1st Belfast ; Rev. James Kirkpatrick, 2nd Belfast ; Rev. John Henderson, Dunean ; Rev. Samuel Harpur, Moira ; Rev. John Mearns or Mairs, Newtownards ; Rev. Thomas Nevin, Downpatrick ; Rev. John Orr, Comber ; Rev. Osborne, Limavady ; Rev. Thomas Shaw, Ahoghill ; Rev. Patrick Simpson, Dundalk ; Rev. Wm. Taylor, Cairncastle ; Rev. Thos. Wilson, Ballyclare.

The dispute which led to this separation was not on points of doctrine ; it was on imposing human decisions touching Divine truths as tests of orthodoxy, even when the tests were admitted by both parties to be proper. During the debate Abernethy said : **"To endeavour to beget and confirm a Divine faith,** founded on the testimony of God in his Word is very worthy of Gospel ministers, but I cannot see that a declaration made by fallible men, **however true in itself,** can give any just foundation for the faith of a Christian ; it does indeed tend to beget in the people a **human faith,** and to induce them to neglect the diligent search of the Scriptures, the only rule of faith ; to receive religious opinions on the authority of Synods and Councils which is really of no weight in such cases."

Rev. Samuel Haliday's reply to Synod's request to renew his assent to the Westminister Confession also proves the dispute was on Non-Subscription. He was originally licensed to preach at Rotterdam, and having been installed by the Presbytery of Belfast as pastor of the 1st Congregation, it was discovered that he had not properly assented when licensed. He replied "My refusal to declare my adherence to the assent I gave when I was licensed does not proceed from my disbelief of the important truths contained in it ; but my scruples are against submitting to **human tests** of divine truths, especially in a great number of extra essential points, when imposed as a necessary term of communion."

The Non-Subscribers drew up proposals for peace, in which they repudiate all tests of orthodoxy as terms of communion, and maintained that all Christians who comply with Christ's

terms as recorded in the New Testament, have a right, by the Gospel charter, to be received into religious fellowship; every man is left free to judge for himself according to his best light what are the terms enjoined by the Gospel.

A Sadly Neglected Classic.

Wordsworth's Prelude is in the nature of an autobiography, and an autobiography of a special kind. The sub-title of the poem gives the kind and its theme. It is the story of "The growth of a Poet's mind." Coleridge's phrase had been "The growth of an individual mind"—the story of the foundations and growth of a human spirit. Frederic Myers calls it "an epic poem on his own education"; but it is much more than that, at least the word education, as generally understood, ill defines the process by which a mind free from most of the trammels that afflict and degrade society, is tutored to strength and independence of outlook by a free communion with the spirit of Nature, and through it with the Soul that comprehends the whole, which we call God. The author of the Prelude is "the fated man of men whom the ages must obey." Out of the soul of Wordsworth the poetry of freedom, of equal rights and of universal brotherhood, sprang full-grown into a life of earnest protest against tyranny of all kinds, political, moral, or priestly, into a life naturally spiritual—

> "For know we not that from celestial spheres
> When time was young an inspiration came
> To hallow saddest tears and help life onward in its noblest aim."

> "A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides
> And o'er the heart of man—invisibly it comes
> Directing those who care not, know not, think not what they do."

The thought comes to one as we read and ponder the Prelude that Wordsworth could have said like Montaigne, "My book is myself." It might I think be called—slightly altering Goethe's story of his early years—"Truth in Poetry out of my Life." On what does its immortality lie? If you will only take the neat pocket edition of it on your holidays and quietly read and ponder over it you will find that it is your own history which is being told to you. This is what makes Wordsworth a helpful religious poet, the sense that in him we find our own experiences reproduced. The Prelude is a document of real authentic human interest, and is one of the foremost books on religious education in our literature. Four things you will find all through it—independence of spirit, resentment at any restraint, deep and abiding love of liberty for himself and for the world, and a firm conviction that it is not through knowledge that we grow—unless that knowledge be accompanied by feeling—that great, pure, exalted thoughts are due not to knowledge, but to right and elevated feeling. When Coleridge read it in 1805, he said "It is an Orphic song indeed, a song divine of high and passionate thoughts to their own music chanted. A work that makes audible a linked lay of truth, of truth profound, a sweet continuous lay, not learnt, but native, her own natural notes." A truer description of the Prelude could hardly be given. It is a lay of truth at once sweet and profound that brings us in almost every note into closest touch with Nature. There is probably nothing in the whole range of literature that does this to the same extent and with so subtle a mastery. In Nature Wordsworth had learned to find not only consolation and strength, but the direct poetic impulse which gave his work its special significance and value as a contribution to literature. But when Wordsworth speaks of Nature, it is not of nature as we usually understand the term, but of that nature with something superadded. To Wordsworth the beauty and passion of nature live and breathe,

and Nature becomes not the universal seat of deity, but is herself the Divine Presence. There is no mind more in tune with the Infinite than that of Wordsworth.

The preamble to the Prelude was composed as early as 1795, the work was completed in the summer of 1805, but was not published till after Wordsworth's death in 1850. Wordsworth revised it in 1839. Professor de Selincourt has now given us a multi-variorum edition. For the first time we see the changing thought of Wordsworth and we can compare the Wordsworth of 35 with the Wordsworth of three score years and ten. Professor de Selincourt's book " is one of the most finished pieces of conscientious and loving scholarship that the English genius has ever produced." We now can compare both the political and theological changes of the author of that book which Professor Bradley has called " the greatest long poem in our language," after ' Paradise Lost.' " Every time I read it," writes Lord Grey, " the interest to be found in it, grows wider and deeper and more intense." Its biographical interest passes into the experience of humanity. Its invocation is no more personal, but universal—the client not Wordsworth, but mankind ; the gift not poetry, but conduct. It was by the closest and most painstaking self-examination, by an industrious abstraction of every element in his experience of accident or chance, that Wordsworth's record became a universal law. The story of the Prelude, illuminated by passages of transcendend insight which make their own music, becomes the best way of life—from the finality of youthful acquirement through the disillusion of worldly wisdom to the peace of the " years that bring the philosophic mind."

It is divided into 13 books. The higher theme of the whole, the theme that comes inevitably forward through reflection on the facts of experience, is the spirit of joy running through all creation.

It is unquestionably a serious book, and cannot be read with profit except one is in the spirit for quiet thought which is not easy to cultivate nowadays, even for an hour on Sunday. Here are three suggestive passages from the Prelude—

" Our childhood sits,—
Our simple childhood sits upon a throne
That hath more power than all the elements."

" Dust as we are the immortal spirit grows
Like harmony in music ; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, and makes them cling together
In one society."

" The statue stood of Newton with his prism and silent face
The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of thought, alone."

What is the teaching of the Prelude ? Take the world and the life of man as they are, make the best of them, and you will find that all necessary good is possible. You will find the adequacy of the kindly honest life, however simple. You will find besides that the life and powers of man make his spiritual hopes reasonable. And you will join the great fellowship of men moving towards the unknown goal with patient and splendid trust. This deeper education giving these convictions and settling the rising generation in this spirit, in despite of all that fights against them, is the culture of which Wordsworth is an apostle—

" That serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on
Until the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things."
Singer of humble themes and noblest thought.

G.V.C.

" The identical thing that we now call the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and has not been lacking from the beginnings of the human race until the coming of Christ in the flesh, from which moment on, the true religion, which already existed began to be called Christian."

St. Augustine.

The Annual Meetings.

The above, held in the First Church, Belfast, on June 15th and 16th, proved more than usually successful. After the Remonstrant Synod had met and the Irish Association had again adjourned its Annual Meeting, a Social Reception was held in the Central Hall. Careful and elaborate arrangements had been made by Mrs. J. Glynne Davies and her band of lady helpers. The refreshments were excellent, while the miscellaneous instrumental and vocal programme of music gave great pleasure. It was unfortunate that at this function, so calculated to foster our *esprit d' corps* as a community, there was not a larger attendance. We feel sure that those who were present will be desirous of repeating the experience next year and be responsible for the assembly of many additional visitors. The Moderator (Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson, M.A.,) presided and suitably expressed the company's appreciation.

The same evening the Annual Service was held in the First Church, and was conducted by Mr. Tilson, with the organist and choir of the above responsible for the music. The hymns were well-chosen and heartily sung, while the solo was admirably rendered by Miss Gordon. The sermon was excellent and most opportune, being followed with the closest interest by an attendance much above the average on this occasion. By means of careful illustration from Christian history the preacher indicated the rise and progress of religious liberty, with the heresy-hunter ever in close and anxious attendance. The discourse sounded the needed note of hope and encouragement.

On the Wednesday morning the Communion Service conducted by Mr. Tilson was a very suitable opening for a strenuous day. The General Synod followed and it is a pleasure to be able to announce that the attendance thereat was the best for some years, the laity being chiefly responsible for the appreciated improvement. Another gratifying feature was the larger space allotted to our meetings in the local press. We have pleasure in reproducing the full report of the General Synod's proceedings as it appeared the following day in the "Northern Whig," It is reminiscent of what was once the common custom of that organ of opinion in the detailing of our ecclesiastical doings.

The Annual Dinner was held this year on the evening of Wednesday, June 16th, in the capacious and comfortably furnished restaurant in Messrs. Anderson & M'Auley's. The attendance thereat seemed also an improvement on that of recent years. The newly appointed Moderator (the Rev. Edgar Lockett) presided, and had the support of his predecessor. He performed his obviously congenial duties with grace and good humour. The accustomed toasts were honoured. The meal itself was well cooked and well served, a very important asset on such an occasion. The atmosphere was one of friendly and loyal comradeship in a common cause. Concerning this latter we had later a very illuminating and inspiring exposition from the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., the subject of his address being "The Place of the General Synod in our Church Life." Instruction and an inspiring appeal were admirably combined to the great edification of his large audience. The brief devotional exercises were in the hands of the new Moderator, while the grateful appreciation of the hearers of Mr. Gordon's address was voiced by the minister of the First Church (the Rev. H. J. Rossington). As the address was intended for ourselves and not for the outside public no report of it appeared in the local newspapers. This particular meeting brought to a fitting conclusion our series of gatherings whereat there had transpired much to encourage and stimulate to fresh endeavour.

From "Northern Whig," June 17th.

GENERAL SYNOD MEETING.

The seventeenth ordinary meeting of the General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland was held on June 16th., in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, when the outgoing Moderator (Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson, M.A.) appealed to the laymen for a keener interest in the Church, and the Rev. Edgar Lockett was elected Moderator for the ensuing year.

The retiring Moderator said that after a year of pleasant intercourse it now devolved upon him to hand over the office to which they had elected him last year. Early in the year there was a movement which had for its aim the deepening of the spiritual life of the members of their Church. In connection with that movement meetings were held in Belfast and the country districts. From the various reports which had reached him he considered that those meetings had been beneficial and useful to their members. He trusted that those meetings would be continued not alone in Belfast, but also in the country churches during the autumn and winter months.

His next point was more particularly for the laymen, and he wished they would take a keener and greater interest in the Church. They, in common with every other denomination, lamented the fact that people did not attend church in the way they did some years ago. Blame was attributed to this, that, and the other cause, and, of course, the minister was the one always to blame. He thought a great deal of help could be given by laymen to the minister in that particular. People who came to the church —or rather did not come—would appreciate very much if a layman spoke to them about not going to church and not seeing them there, as it would show that there was a sense of brotherhood in the church, whereas if the minister spoke to them they considered it was only his duty. He therefore hoped the laymen would support the efforts of the clergymen in that particular part of their work.

The Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., proposed the Rev. Edgar Lockett as Moderator for the ensuing year. Mr. Lockett had been nonimated by the Antrim Presbytery, and the reasons for their decision was his seniority as far as the ministry was concerned. He had settled in Ireland in 1906, and was a valued member of the Bangor Presbytery, but seeking wider experience, he subsequently went to England. On coming back to Erin he settled in the Presbytery of Antrim, and that constituted a second claim to their suffrages, for he had seen the inside of two presbyteries. He had also a saving sense of humour, which meant that he had a due sense of proportion, and even a Moderator might take himself too seriously. He therefore thought it would be wise to appoint Mr. Lockett as their Moderator.

Rev. J. G. Davies proposed the Rev. David J. Williams, who had been nominated by the Presbyteries of Bangor and Templepatrick, should be elected Moderator.

Rev. M. Watkins seconded Mr. Williams's appointment, and said they would be wise to regard the wishes of two presbyteries in their decision. It was customary to do so.

Rev. G. V. Crook seconded the election of Mr. Lockett.

Rev. Edgar Lockett said if it was a fact that it was the rule that the number of presbyteries governed the matter then he would have the greatest pleasure in withdrawing his name and supporting his friend, Mr. Williams.

Rev. H. J. Rossington said they had set that rule aside before, and when they had only three presbyteries he thought it very unwise to act on such a rule.

A vote was taken, and resulted :— Mr. Lockett, 16 ; Mr. Williams, 14. Mr. Lockett was then declared elected.

The new Moderator took the chair amidst applause. He thanked the members for the honour they had bestowed on him. It was an honour he appreciated very much, but it was an honour he had not sought. He felt himself that it was a most unfortunate thing that according to the custom which ruled in their Church two ministers who were good friends should be put up, as it were, in competition for that office. He himself felt bound to stand loyally by his own Presbytery, and of course the others felt themselves bound to stand loyally by their Presbyteries. However, they had seen fit to choose him for the position—a position for which he felt in many ways to be unfitted, but he would do his best to show himself worthy of the confidence they had placed in him.

Rev. G. J. Slipper was reappointed clerk to the Synod, and Rev. J. A. Kelly, hon. treasurer.

Rev. G. J. Slipper submitted the report of the General Purposes Committee, which stated that letters of sympathy had been sent to the relatives of the late Rev. William Park, D.D., also to the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Session of the Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church.

A letter had been received from Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.SC., Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, relative to organising a forward movement in the autumn of 1925. The Clerk was instructed to prepare and send a copy of the letter to every member of the General Purposes Committee for consideration.

After discussion it had been agreed that they were fully in acquiescense with the suggestion of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association that circumstances were propitious for a Forward Movement of the Liberal Christian Churches, and resolved that they would take steps to carry this out.

A discussion had taken place at the October meeting of the Committee on the question of the transfer and management of public elementary schools. The opinion had been generally expressed that the Non-Subscribing interest in public elementary education was not being fairly dealt with, and it had been agreed that any dissatisfaction should be reported to the existing sub-committee in charge of educational matters.

After discussion the report was received and adopted.

The financial statement, submitted by Rev. J. A. Kelly, was of a satisfactory nature.

The reports of the Bangor, Templepatrick, and Antrim Presbyteries were submitted by their respective clerks—Rev. J. A. Kelly, Rev. Eustace Thompson, and Rev. A. O. Ashworth.

The report of the Sunday School Committee stated that arrangements for the production of a new hymnal were now complete, and proof copies had been issued.

When the report of the Temperance Committee came up for consideration it was stated that as there had been no meeting of the Committee there was no report.

The Moderator suggested that they pass on to the next business.

The Clerk said it should not be passed over so lightly. A committee was appointed last year by the Synod to take up temperance work, and they ought to have some report as to whether any work had been done or not. They were just dallying with the temperance question as a Church in a way that was not worthy of them. He had spoken before with regard to this, and had got rapped over the knuckles, so he would say no more. He thought the Synod should take up the serious consideration of a social matter, such as the temperance cause, and their Church would surely stand for the welfare of the people. Temperance was one of those things that ought to be considered. If they passed away from the subject it meant that their Temperance Committee was to be swept away. Why should it be swept

away? This was a matter which should be taken seriously.

Mr. R. M. Laird moved that no committee be appointed until the Church, as a Church, took up the question in earnest. It was only camouflage on their part to appoint a committee when it was dormant.

Rev. J. G. Davies and Rev. P. Godding referred to the good work for temperance done by the congregations.

Rev. M. Watkins said most successful work had been done in connection with their Bands of Hope during the past winter, but it had not been due to their Temperance Committee.

Mr. H. Leyland said that they ought to take a definite stand with regard to the question of drink. Why should they not go all the way and prohibit drink and the creation of lunatics? The sober people found that the drinking people were a great nuisance, and were a charge upon the community. He understood from the local Press that the lunacy in the county of Armagh had doubled in twelve months, although he would not say that the Armagh people were drinkers. He was constantly up against the moderate drinkers, who always claimed the right to drink and have drink. Such people were the greatest nuisance to the community. They had always an excuse, but an excuse to drink would not forward the temperance movement from an alcoholic view-point. If their Church meant anything at all, let them go all out and support prohibition.

They found the temperance people advocating temperance. Why not say right out that alcohol, being a danger, was a setback to their people, destroying them mentally and morally? It was about time they took up the question seriously of doing away with that real evil to their people.

Rev. W. G. Marsden said he had the courage of his convictions. He did not mind a prohibitionist having all the prohibition he liked, but he thought moral suasion was the only thing they could have as free Christians. They must allow their neighbours to be free

Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Bangor Congregation

SERVICE EACH SUNDAY EVENING

At 7 o'clock,

IN

Thompson's Tea Rooms, Main St.

(OPPOSITE POST OFFICE)

Minister: Rev. A. Whitford, Moneyrea.

Hon, Treasurer:
Mr. T. LILLIE,
6 Bingham St., Bangor.

Hon. Secretary:
Mr. GEORGE HILL,
45 Ballyholme Esplanade.

also, according to their conscience. If a man felt he should take a little for his stomach's sake, and if he felt that honestly, then he had Scriptural authority for it.

Rev. A. L. Agnew, proposed a resolution that in view of the convincing evidence brought before them by their Temperance Committee, that the alcoholic traffic was an unmitigated evil, the Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church considered that the traffic should be entirely abolished. He said the Church should not temporise on that matter. The drink traffic should be put an end to here and now. It would stand to the credit of their church to declare against the drink traffic.

Rev. P. Godding seconded.

Mr. R. M. Laird said the time was not ripe for Mr. Agnew's proposal. He proposed as an amendment that the Synod viewed with alarm the amount of unemployment and conseuqent distress in their midst, and, believing that the widespread indulgence in alcoholic liquor was one of the chief causes of that condition of things, called upon the Government to introduce at the earliest opportunity a measure of local option. That would be a more reasonable suggestion to make.

Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson seconded the amendment.

Mr. H. Leyland supported the original motion, although he was not against the amendment. It was time they dealt with the evil. The people engaged in it called it a trade, but it was not a trade any more than the opium traffic was a trade. That was a black spot on the British escutcheon. The Drink traffic was another black spot. The unemployment problem would never be solved until they tackled the drink traffic. He never saw a drunk man educated into a sober man, and sheer necessity and compulsion was the only thing.

Rev. J. G. Davies said he would not have prohibition forced upon him. The high and mighty attitude of the prohibitionists was nauseous. They wanted temperance in all things and moderation in all things, and moderation dealing with that question was one of the virtues they should strive after.

On a vote being taken the amendment was carried by 15 votes to 12.

When the amendment was put as a substantive motion it was defeated by 18 votes to 13.

The Moderator, after some discussion as to where the Synod stood, said that as far as he could see the House wanted neither the original resolution nor the amendment.

Mr. Laird proposed another resolution—that the Synod viewed with alarm the indulgence in alcoholic liquor, and called upon the Government to introduce at the earliest opportunity a measure of local option.

The motion, which was seconded by Rev. David J. Williams, was carried by 19 votes to 3 against.

The Temperance Committee was re-elected, with the exception of Mr. R. M. Laird, who declined to act, stating that he would do everything he could for temperance in his personal capacity.

On the motion of the Rev. J. A. Kelly, a resolution was passed to the effect that that Synod, recognising the claims of the Hibernian Bible Society upon their support, strongly urged those claims upon the members of their congregations, and would request their ministers to devote one Sunday in the year to the study of its operations, and that their people be asked to interest themselves in that excellent Society, of which one, at least, of their much respected ministers was amongst its prominent founders.

BEAUTY.

The beauty of the naked moor,
The beauty of the hedged fields,
The beauty of the living streams—
  All these have entered into me
  And made my voice a melody,
And made my heart a singing lute,
And made my thoughts like lovely dreams.

The beauty of the lonely lane,
The beauty of the sleeping pool,
The beauty of the angry sky—
  All these have entered into me
  And made my mind a harmony,
And made my limbs like leaping waves,
And made my springs of rancour dry.

ROBERTO GALLETTI.

Liberal Religion.

The Unity of God implies the unity of man, and that implies the unity of religion which binds man to God. Unitarians have long been familiar with the distinction between Religion and religions, which is practically the same as that between Religion and theology. Unitarians are on very close terms of friendship and co-operation with the Brahma Somaj in India. Out of the Brahma Somaj, came the Arya Somaj, and out of the Arya Somaj came the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society.

The attitude of Unitarians towards the other great religions of the world is different from that of many other Christian denominations, which might be expressed in the words of a Church of England missionary: "God has given India to England, that Christianity might be planted in India, and all the native religions driven out before it." That attitude in days gone by has been accountable for a great deal of mischief, and among a large portion of the population has caused an intense hatred against Christianity.

A religion which has a century of centuries behind it, must necessarily have orthodoxies, accretions which have encrusted it during the long efflux of time. All the great religions suffer in the same way, and such orthodoxy is frequently accompanied by tyranny and superstition, and by the prejudiced outsider is represented as being the religion itself. But, at the heart of all is the Divine Unity, and the light that lightens every man born into the world, the Divine Wisdom which was always in the world, and wherever recognised is always a liberalising and spiritualising influence. Three religions might be mentioned where this liberalising influence is at work: Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism; but space will only permit of one of these to be dealt with. Hinduism and Buddhism are more individual than collective in their forms of worship. The people do not meet regularly for congregational worship; but go occasionally to the Shrine for their personal devotions. In days gone by, Hindu Temples were to a large extent polluted by animal sacrifices, but a part of the mission of Buddha was to cause this degrading form of worship (unworthy of a Supreme Being whose scheme of the universe is benevolent, and who loves all that He has made), to cease in the majority of cases, though here and there it still survives.

The fire upon the altar can give forth fragrance and be a sacred symbol, and the shrine can be consecrated to be a centre of holy influences, and so to purify Hinduism from within, the Bharata Samaja exists: "The League of the Children of India." Its objects are:—

1. To strengthen and broaden the basis of Hinduism.

2. To promote the welfare and progress of all classes and sections of Hindus.

3. To promote tolerance, good feeling and a spirit of co-operation between Hindus and followers of other faiths.

The system of congregational worship is being encouraged, and the ancient ritual purified and liberalised is being made use of, and in this form is very impressive and edifying. The service is in Sanskrit, which is as Latin to the Roman Church; but, the worshippers can follow the service, because in their common every-day speech they know the meaning of the prayers. It begins with the Gayatri: "Unveil, O Thou, who givest sustenance to the universe the face of that true Sun, now hidden by a vase of golden light, that we may see Thy truth, and do our whole duty, on our journey to Thy Sacred Seat." During the whole ceremony the thought of the hidden work is kept in mind, the response which comes from above and the blessing that radiates outward to the world. On the stone altar the

sacred fire burns, and incense is used, though not in a swinging cense, but in a bowl with a handle, like a ladle. There is a confession and absolution, though different from the Christian form: "The sins by me committed, whether in thought, in word or in deed, may be destroyed, as also the evil in my nature," followed by the self-absolution: "In the crucible of Immortality, in the Flaming Sun, I here put myself through the Purification by Fire."

Then the Brahman says: "I close our place of worship from every side against undesirable intrusion, leaving it open only to the influences from on high," and afterwards he censes the congregation inwardly praying that blessing may accompany the fragrance. The details of the ritual are too long to give here; but, there is a Sacrament of Water and Cocoanut, which is distributed among the people, and finally the benediction:—"May blessing be upon the children of men. May that which is of good effect go always singing upwards. May blessing be upon the animals. May all be filled with happiness, may all be relieved of trouble. May all attain to blessed things; may no one suffer pain, Om; peace, peace, peace."

Such is an ancient form of worship, purified, adapted to needs of the present day. So would Christ have purified the worship in the Temple of the Jews; but, he was rejected, and a devout Jew writing of his religion, says:—

"A soul-destroying materialism seems to engulf all, and little attempt is made to steer clear of the reefs of spiritual atrophy towards which modern Judaism seems to be heading. The orthodox Jew keeps to the letter of the Law and fails to see its mystic meaning. The Liberal Jew disregards the letter but fails likewise to seek its spirit"

> "Shall, Jew and Gentile, meeting
> From many a distant shore,
> Around one altar kneeling,
> One common Lord adore?"
>
> ULLIN.

A Scientific Soul.

Monsieur Charles Henry, a professor at the Sorbonne at Paris, considers that he has at last obtained irrefragable scientific proof of the survival of man after death. He is reported to have said, "Hitherto it has been agreed by scientists that when a man dies, he dies for good. That is an error. A few patient experiments, accessible to all who know how to handle the necessary appliances, will be sufficient to prove this." He goes on to speak of certain invisible radiations, evidence of which he is constantly encountering, which remain always an unknown quantity in connection with every human body during life. At death "these things go away and seek another envelope in order again to find equilibrium and harmony. We never die entirely. What is particularly yourself in you, that little something which gives you a personality among millions of your kind, is perfectly immortal. You pass your soul on to another; that is all." He further remarked that this theory explains many factors in human life that appear to indicate a previous existence. The proof of this is said to depend on very intricate mathematical calculation. Many will look forward with interest to further information on this subject, which if fully substantiated, may easily develope into a discovery of paramount importance to the world.

Reports.

Belfast: First Church.—Sunday, June 6th, was the 143rd Anniversary of the opening of the present church building of the First Congregation, the opening day being the First Sunday in June, 1783. The members were invited to make it a Full Attendance Day and right well did they respond. In the morning there was a splendid attendance, and although the evening one was not quite so good it was decidedly encouraging. The Minister (Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.) was

in charge of both services and his sermons were quite appropriate to the occasion, their respective titles being : "Our Heritage," and "Our Stewardship." While referring to some of the interesting stages of past development, and emphasising the necessity of our gratitude for the great legacies received from the past, the preacher stressed even more the responsibilities of the present and the obligation to continue in well-doing. Special music was contributed by the organist and choir, "Hear my Prayer" being splendidly rendered in the evening. Altogether the Anniversary Services proved most inspiring and should serve as a stimulus to the future. On Saturday, June 19th, the Sunday School Excursion was held at Warrenpoint, and a large attendance of the scholars with parents and friends made the journey to that popular seaside resort. Although at first gloomy conditions prevailed, and some rain fell on the actual journey, the weather became gloriously fine and sunny later, and created ideal conditions. Thanks to the kindly efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Slipper, a suitable field had been procured as the base of operations, and there the two meals were served under the superintendence of Mr. Robert M'Crum and the teachers, with the willing assistance of many friends. The provisions came, in continuance of a now long-standing arrangement, from the Bloomfield Bakery, hearty appetites registering practical appreciation of the fare. Many races were held and the competitive spirit was keen for the prizes which rewarded the prowess of the winners. In addition to the prizes awarded by the school officials, friendly lookers-on also contributed handsome rewards as consolation and other prizes. Consequently, a great number of active young people proved the better for the exercise and its generous recognition. But during the day the party split up into many groups seeking for the pleasures of the sea or the country-side. Both were seen at their best, and excursions by water or by land vied with each other in their attractiveness. When the time came to make the return journey to Belfast all agreed that the day had proved one of the most enjoyable and successful ever held in connection with the Sunday School. Both the outward and the homeward journeys were very comfortable, being practically non-stop runs in specially reserved carriages. Grateful thanks are due to Mr. M'Crum and Miss Hewitt and their helpers for the admirable arrangements throughout the day and in preparation therefor.

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Ballyhemlin.—The Meeting House is in need of renovation, and a considerable sum will be required for that purpose, to which generous contributions have already been made by certain friends and members of the congregation, but, even more will be required than has been obtained so far, and contributions sent to F. M. Allen, Esq., Nunsquarter, Kircubbin, or J. R. Rankin, Esq., J.P., Rocklands, Kircubbin, will be gratefully acknowledged. A special sermon was preached on June 20th by the Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A., at which a large representative congregation was present, the collection amounting to £23 15s. 3d. Mr. Gordon's power as a preacher was evidenced by the exceedingly masterly way in which he handled his subject : Matthew, 12 : 41—"A greater than Jonah is here." Jonah was a Puritan of the type of John Knox. The story was not appreciated as it ought to be, attention being drawn away from the theme, by incidents pronounced as grotesque by those who did not know how to make allowance for eastern imagery and symbolism. Nineveh was a great city, three days' journey across, in which Belfast might well be content with a corner. The word had come to Jonah to cry against the city ; but Jonah considered that God was too merciful in giving the city warning and opportunity for repentance. They were a thorough bad lot, why shouldn't they be wiped out of existence instantly ? There were quaint little word

pictures, such as Jonah paying his passage money, as he stepped on board the ship, fleeing from the presence of the Lord. When, a second time, he had the opportunity and entered the gate of the great city, and after a day's journey had only got a third of the way up the street, and saw on each side, luxury and vanity and folly, in puritanical glee he shouted, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall perish!" The despotic command of the King and the repentance of the population was not incredible. So Christ, whose outward success did not compare with that of Jonah, or of John the Baptist, who brought about a wonderful revival, made use of this story, proclaiming that a greater than Jonah is here. The preacher pictured an imaginary tombstone and epitaph to Jesus Christ, and asked, is that all that Christ means? The living Christ is a power and a force in the world to-day, the Christ who valued individuals, the same abideth for ever.

* *

Domestic Mission.—The Stanhope Street Women's League had a very enjoyable visit to Comber on Monday, 7th June, by kind invitation of the Comber Women's League. A special bus took the party direct to the residence of Mrs. Thomas Andrews, where the beauty of the house and grounds enchanted and even the falling rain could not detract from the beauty of the gardens. Then a move to the church was made where a handsome repast was enjoyed followed by an entertainment in which Mrs. James Andrews, Mrs. John Miller Andrews, Mrs. Hugh Ferguson, and Mrs. E. R. Jackson took part, Mrs. B. Ferguson acting as accompanist. An amusing sketch entitled "That Piece of Silk," was presented by junior members of the Comber W. L. Each member of the Stanhope Street W. L. carried away a large bunch of flowers as a souvenir of a delightful social evening. On Monday, June 14th, members of the Stanhope Street League took train to Helen's Bay for a picnic on the shore—an exhilarating afternoon in the sun and wind, a hearty tea and an exploration of the cliff paths proved the success of the venture and it was the general opinion that the experience must be repeated.

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Larne.—On the 12th May a very successful meeting of the Larne Branch of the Women's League was held. Mrs. E. R. Jackson of Belfast, gave a very interesting paper on "The Possibilities of the League," which was most helpful and much appreciated. The President, Miss S. E. Kinder, kindly provided tea, and visitors from Raloo, Cairncastle and Ballycarry were welcomed. The League in Larne has now 50 members. The branch was formed at the end of last year and there have been six meetings which have been well attended.

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Mountpottinger.—The Annual Floral Services were held on June 13th, when we had as special preacher Rev. G. J. Slipper of Newry. The church was very tastefully decorated with flowers of many different varieties, this work being undertaken by members of the Women's League who had the able assistance of the Minister. Fortunately the weather kept fine if not brilliant and we had very fair congregations, although in the afternoon the attendance was not quite up to the usual average. The preacher for the day gave three pleasing addresses and in the afternoon he held the attention of the scholars in a very marked manner.

Obituary.

Mrs. J. Orr Abernethy, Mountpottinger.

The death of Mrs. J. Orr Abernethy, which occurred on June 1st., has deprived our fellowship of a devoted member. For upwards of two years she had been in declining health, and she bore with singular courage and cheerfulness her affliction.

Mrs. Abernethy was a native of Co. Antrim, and worshipped until the time of her marriage at our Ballycarry

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meeting house. She was a woman of sterling qualities and remained throughout her long life a liberal in politics as in religion. Her love of country was rivalled only by her love of our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. Of her it could be said without reserve that she was in the spirit for worship on the Lord's Day. The Sunday School held a warm place in her affections, and until failing health prevented her, she never missed joining the Sunday School Annual Excursion, and attending the Christmas Party.

With the sorrowing relatives the deepest sympathy is felt in their sad bereavement.

The funeral took place on the following Friday, and the services at "Edenderg," and at the graveside at Moneyrea, were conducted by the Rev. M. Watkins.

DEATH.

GREENFIELD.—June 5th. At Northern Bank House, Shercock, Co. Cavan, Elizabeth Dickson, widow of Wm. H. Greenfield, Jackson Hall, Craigavad, Co. Down.

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